

A VEIN TREATMENT TIMELINE

E-BOOK

Vein issues are not to be taken lightly. While most patients see their issues start off small, if left untreated, vein issues can often turn into something gruesome to deal with. This doesn't happen overnight of course. We see so much misinformation spewn around the Internet these days, especially when it comes to disorders and proper treatment. The Vein Clinic of Greater Kansas City wants to keep things transparent and help clear up any misconceptions about vein issues and treatment. Here's a timeline of what the average vein patient goes through from the onset of symptoms through the recovery from treatment.

SPIDER VEIN TREATMENT

SYMPTOMS

Symptoms start mild and get more severe as time progresses.

EARLY SYMPTOMS:

- Burning
- Itching
- Aching

PROGRESSED SYMPTOMS:

- Heavy legs that tire easily
- Symptoms worsen as the day progresses
- Relief can come with walking, elevating the legs or by wearing compression garments
- Red, blue or purplish threadlike veins that can look like a spider's web - visible on the surface of the skin

DIAGNOSIS

The first step to getting treatment is to have a consult with a vein specialist for a diagnosis. Patients come in at all stages of their vein disorders, but the sooner a patient comes in, the more effective treatment can be at eliminating the problem veins and helping the patient heal quicker. Your doctor will first diagnose what type of vein issues you are suffering from and then suggest a treatment plan that may consist of one or a mix of treatment options.

(Average wait time from diagnosis to treatment is 7-30 days, depending on the insurance company's predetermination period)

VARICOSE VEIN TREATMENT

SYMPTOMS

Symptoms come on slowly and continue to become more severe when left untreated.

EARLY SYMPTOMS:

- Leg fatigue
- Pain or a heavy feeling in the legs relieved by elevation
- Twisted, bulging veins above the surface of the skin

PROGRESSED SYMPTOMS:

- Large twisted veins, bulging above the surface of the skin
- Swelling of the ankle or lower leg
- Discolored, dry, itch skin near the ankle
- A rash or skin ulceration on the ankle or lower leg

DIAGNOSIS

Varicose vein issues tend to be on a larger scale than spider veins, which also means they require more drastic treatments and time to heal. Coming in soon after you experience symptoms is key to more effective treatment and keeping healing time to a minimum. Your doctor will diagnose your vein issue and suggest a treatment plan that may consist of one or a mix of treatment options.

(Average wait time from diagnosis to treatment is 7-30 days, depending on the insurance company's predetermination period)

SPIDER VEIN TREATMENT

TREATMENT

Before treatment, vein doctors usually recommend compression hose, along with healthy lifestyles, exercise and keeping your weight down to see if they help prior to any treatment. If vein issues are glaring, treatments are usually scheduled quickly.

Sclerotherapy: Procedure Time 30-45 minutes

One of the most common spider vein treatments is sclerotherapy. Recent studies show that patients can expect as many as 50%-80% of injected veins to be eliminated with each session. Less than 10% of the people who have sclerotherapy do not respond to the injections at all. This procedure uses a highly concentrated saline solution or a specially made detergent that is injected directly into the vein, causing the vein to disappear gradually. The procedure is simple and can be performed in an outpatient setting.

Endovenous laser treatment: Procedure Time 1 ½ Hours

Endovenous laser treatment is another widely performed procedure for spider veins. It works by inserting a small laser fiber into the affected vein. Pulses of laser light are delivered inside the vein, which causes the vein to collapse. The procedure is done as an outpatient under local anesthesia.

Radio-frequency occlusion: Procedure Time 1 ½ Hours

Radio-frequency occlusion is performed by inserting a small catheter into the vein. The catheter delivers radio-frequency energy to the vein wall, causing it to heat, collapse, and seal shut. The procedure is generally done in an outpatient or office setting, sometimes under local anesthesia.

RECOVERY

Recovery is fairly easy and painless. Some minimal bruising may appear, but that's about the extent of it. You may be required to wear a compression garment for a couple of weeks following treatment to help encourage healing and keep swelling at bay. Spider veins should respond to most treatments and absorb into the body within three to six weeks. Veins that respond to treatment will not reappear. However, new veins may appear at the same rate as before.

VARICOSE VEIN TREATMENT

TREATMENT

Phlebectomy: Procedure Time 1-3 Hours

Phlebectomy is a minimally invasive treatment for surface varicose veins. Your physician will use local anesthesia to numb the area and then make a very small skin incision near the vein. Then your doctor will insert a phlebectomy hook under the surface of the skin and remove the problem vein through the same small incision. This procedure typically takes between 30 minutes to an hour. The incisions are usually so small they don't require any stitches. Once this is performed, and the affected vein is successfully removed, your results will be almost immediate, but there will be some downtime needed to recover from the small incisions made during the treatment. Your doctor will likely recommend you rest your leg and wear a compression stocking for several weeks after the treatment.

Laser Vein Ablation: Procedure Time 1 Hour, depending on the area.

Laser Vein Ablation is a common minimally invasive treatment. It usually fades veins gradually over a period of several weeks depending on the patient's age and the severity of vein disease. This treatment uses a radio-frequency energy or laser to shrink and seal the affected veins, which allows them to shrink and be naturally absorbed by the body.

RECOVERY

The body takes its own time reabsorbing those veins, so it all depends on your own body's timeline. Most people require between two to six treatments to see a 75-90% improvement in the appearance and symptoms.

Of course all of these timelines are hypothetical and are based on the average vein patient. Each vein patient is unique. Everyone's unique body makeup and progression of vein issue means that no one patient has the same timeline. Hopefully this was able to give you a rough timeline on what to expect from start to finish when it comes to your vein issue diagnosis, treatment, and recovery.

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